



A+ Parent Satisfaction Survey: 2005

Prepared for the Arizona State Board of Education

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Introduction

The *A+ Parent Satisfaction Survey* has been conducted since 2000. The 2005 survey was commissioned by the Arizona State Board of Education (State Board) and conducted by the Arizona Education Policy Initiative (AEPI), a collaboration of Arizona State University, the University of Arizona, and Northern Arizona University. The purpose of the survey is to measure parental satisfaction with Arizona K-12 public schools. In addition, the survey contains questions to measure parental awareness and opinion of key State Board policies.

Methods

Survey Instrument

In an effort to maintain consistency over time, the wording of questions used for the 2005 *A+ Survey* is identical or nearly identical to the *A+ Surveys* in previous years. The parental satisfaction question has been carried over, nearly verbatim, since the initial *A+ survey*. In addition, some questions from the 2004 *A+ survey* are retained in the current survey.¹

The A+ questions were embedded in Arizona Education Policy Initiative's (AEPI's) *Parent Attitudes about Education in Arizona: 2005 survey*. The full AEPI parent survey

instrument is available online at: <http://www.asu.edu/educ/epsl/AEPI/Survey/EPSL-0504-101-AEPI-app.pdf>

The full survey instrument was designed by Dr. David R. Garcia, Dr. Alex Molnar, and Dr. Bruce Merrill of Arizona State University with input from AEPI steering committee members.

Survey Administration

In 2004, the *A+ Survey* was administered via the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) website. The survey was publicized in advance using a flyer disseminated to all public schools. The primary limitation of the 2004 administration method is the self-selected, non-representative sample of respondents who completed the survey. As a result of the sampling bias, the 2004 results are not generalizable to the statewide population of Arizona parents.² In addition, given the limitations of the administration method, the 2004 results are not comparable to the results from previous years or to the 2005 results.

The survey results in this report are based on telephone interviews with a statewide random sample of adult heads of household living in Arizona. The sample, based on 398 interviews, generalizes to all adult heads of household living in Arizona with children attending public schools, including charter schools. The samples were stratified by county to ensure they were representative of all adults living in Arizona. The interview schedule was pre-tested and the interviews conducted by professional interviewers at the Summit Group in Phoenix. The survey was administered during the period March 18 to March 26, 2005. A Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) system was used to conduct the interviews.

If an interview was not successfully completed after eight callbacks, random substitution was allowed with telephone numbers in the same prefix. Sixty-seven percent of the respondents were interviewed successfully. Respondents were given the option of taking the survey in Spanish or English. The sample demographics are contained in the final section of the report.

The sampling error for the statewide sample is plus or minus 4.9 percent, given a response to a question of 50 percent and assuming a 95 percent level of significance. Sampling error varies based on the percentage of the sample that answers a question in a particular way. Sampling errors for various percentages when the sample size is 400 are shown below:

	Sampling Error
50%	4.9%
40% or 60%	4.8%
30% or 70%	4.5%
20% or 80%	3.9%
10% or 90%	2.9%

The data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). All of the following tables reflect the percent of respondents.

Findings

Parent Satisfaction

In rating their schools, the opinions of Arizona parents exhibit a pattern consistent with parents nationally. Arizona parents perceive the schools that their children attend more favorably than Arizona public schools in general.³ While 36 percent of parents rate the school their oldest child attends as “A+” or “A,” only seven percent of parents grade all schools as highly. More than three-fourths of Arizona parents grade the school their oldest child attends an

“A” or a “B” while only 39 percent of Arizona parents grade all Arizona public schools an “A” or a “B.”

Table 1: Grading Arizona Schools

	A+	A	B	C	D	F	No Opinion
What grade would you give to the school your oldest child attends?	7	29	42	17	3	2	1
What grade would you give to the job public schools in Arizona are doing?	1	6	32	37	10	5	9

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100 because of rounding.

Charter school parents grade their schools higher than traditional public school parents ($\chi^2 = 11.11$, $p < 0.05$, excludes the responses “D”, “F,” and “No Opinion” due to low counts).

Table 2: Grading Arizona Schools (Charter School Parents)

	A+	A	B	C	D	F	No Opinion
What grade would you give to the school your oldest child attends?	11	30	35	12	6	4	2

School Accountability

The State Board of Education sets policy for both of Arizona’s school accountability systems, No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and Arizona LEARNS. The degree to which parents are familiar with each school accountability system was assessed as contextual information to

interpret parental opinion of the two accountability systems. Many more parents are familiar with the federal NCLB accountability system than the state accountability system. More than 65 percent of parents are familiar with NCLB compared to 20 percent who are familiar with Arizona LEARNS. A majority of parents who are familiar with NCLB hold favorable opinions of the federal law. Given the limited number of parents who are familiar with Arizona LEARNS, the results on parent opinion are not generalizable to the statewide population.

Table 3: Knowledge of NCLB

	Very Familiar	Somewhat Familiar	Not Very Familiar	Not at all Familiar	No Opinion
How familiar would you say you are with the No Child Left Behind Act – the federal education bill passed by Congress in 2001?	17	49	27	8	0

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100 because of rounding.

Table 4: Opinion of NCLB

	Very Favorable	Generally Favorable	Somewhat Unfavorable	Very Unfavorable	No Opinion
From what you have heard or read about NCLB, what is your opinion of the act?	12	43	30	13	2

Note: This table includes only respondents who were either “very” or “somewhat” familiar with NCLB. The total number of respondents equals 261.

Table 5: Knowledge of Arizona LEARNS

	Very Familiar	Somewhat Familiar	Not Very Familiar	Not at all Familiar	No Opinion
How familiar would you say you are with the Arizona LEARNS – Arizona’s School Accountability System?	5	15	34	46	1

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100 because of rounding.

Table 6: Opinion of Arizona LEARNS

	Very Favorable	Generally Favorable	Somewhat Unfavorable	Very Unfavorable	No Opinion
From what you have heard or read about NCLB, what is your opinion of the act?	4	58	22	9	7

Note: This table includes only respondents who were either “very” or “somewhat” familiar with Arizona LEARNS. The total number of respondents equals 76.

Parent Involvement

Parents self-report a high level of involvement in their children’s school. According to parents, 95 percent report being either very or somewhat involved in their children’s school.

Table 7: Degree of Parent Involvement

	Very	Somewhat	Not
How involved would you say you are in your children’s school?	55	40	5

The Arizona Department of Education publishes School Report Cards as an information source for parents about school policies and academic performance. Sixty-four percent of parents have reviewed a School Report Card, but the incidence rate is significantly higher among Anglo parents. The preponderance of parents, 79 percent, holds a favorable opinion of the School Report Cards.

Table 8: Opinion of School Report Cards

	Very Favorable	Generally Favorable	Somewhat Unfavorable	Very Unfavorable	No Opinion
What is your opinion of the School Report Cards?	25	54	13	3	5

Conclusion

The *A+ Survey* is useful as an overall measure of parental satisfaction with Arizona K-12 public schools. The survey also presents a unique opportunity to solicit feedback from parents about State Board policies and the State Board should continue to use the survey for this purpose.

Sample Demographics

The following tables detail the demographic characteristics of the statewide sample of respondents.

Table 9: Child's School Level

Does your child attend an elementary school, a middle school, or a high school?		
	Percent in 2004	Percent in 2005
Elementary	38.7	37.4
Middle school	20.2	18.6
High school	41.0	43.7
Refused	0	0.3

Table 10: Child Attend a Charter School

If the school your oldest child attends is public, does your child attend a charter school?	
	Percent in 2005
Yes	22.9
No	76.9
No opinion	0.3

Table 11: Children Under Age 6

Do you have a child or children under the age of 6?		
	Percent in 2004	Percent in 2005
Yes	28.2	30.7
No	71.8	69.4

Table 12: Years Lived in Arizona

How many years have you lived in Arizona?		
	Percent in 2004	Percent in 2005
Less than 10 years	23.1	18.3
10 to 20 years	23.9	31.6
21 or more years	52.4	48.5
No response	0.2	1.51

Table 13: Language Spoken in Household

Which of the following best characterizes your household?		
	Percent in 2004	Percent in 2005
We speak only English in our household	84.3	82.9
We speak mainly English, but another language as well	15.7	17.1
We speak little or no English in our household	N/A	0
Refused to answer	N/A	0

Table 14: Race/Ethnicity of Surveyed Parents

In terms of race or ethnicity, which of the following do you most identify with?		
	Percent in 2004	Percent in 2005
White or Anglo	77.5	73.9
Hispanic or Latino	11.7	14.1
Native American	3.4	3.3
African American	4.0	1.8
Two or more races	N/A	4.0
Something else	3.4	2.3
Refused to answer	0	0.8

Table 15: Parents' Education

How many years of formal education have you completed?	
	Percent in 2005
High school or less	15.6
Some college or trade school	42.0
Graduated college	42.2
Refused to answer	0.3

Table 16: Access to the Internet

Do you have access to the internet?	
	Percent in 2005
Yes	91.2
No	8.8

Table 17: Born in United States

Were you born in the United States?		
	Percent in 2004	Percent in 2005
Yes	92.9	92.7
No	7.1	7.3

Table 18: Registered to Vote in Arizona

Are you registered to vote in Arizona?		
	Percent in 2004	Percent in 2005
Yes	92.6	93.7
No	7.4	6.3

Table 19: County of Residence

In what county do you reside?		
	Percent in 2004	Percent in 2005
Maricopa	61.5	63.6
Pima	16.5	14.3
Other	21.9	21.9
Refused	0	0.3

Table 20: Gender of Parent Surveyed

	Percent in 2004	Percent in 2005
Male	45	44.2
Female	55	55.8

Table 21: Language Used for Survey

	Percent in 2004	Percent in 2005
English	98.6	100
Spanish	0.9	0
Both	0.6	0

Notes & References

¹ For the 2004 survey questions, see:

Arizona Department of Education, Research and Evaluation Division. (July, 2004). *A+ program parent satisfaction survey summary report*. Phoenix, AZ: Author.

² In the 2004 survey, the generalizability of the results to a statewide population is described as ‘difficult.’

³ Rose, L.C. & Gallup, A.M. (2004, September). *The 36th annual Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup poll of the public's attitudes toward the public schools*. Princeton, N.J.: Phi Delta Kappa. Retrieved April 14, 2005, from <http://www.pdkintl.org/kappan/k0409pol.htm>